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The Conquest of Damascus: A Study in Narratives

*Saleh M. Daradkeh**

ABSTRACT

The Islamic Conquests are one of the unique phenomena in world history and so they have received special attention in both early and modern studies. Scholars have thought that the conquests cannot be studied without depending on Arabic primary sources. But as those sources differ in their narrative of the events of the conquests depending on the personal predilections of the narrator and his political, tribal and sectarian inclinations, research into those events has become a very difficult and laborious task.

Many scholars have made serious attempts to study the Islamic conquests in general and the conquest of Bilad al-Sham in particular, but those attempts have not removed the obscurity that still surrounds some of the narratives.

This study complements previous research with regard to the methodology adopted by scholars of the Islamic tradition. The researcher has collected and analyzed the narratives and examined the trustworthiness and authenticity of the narrators and has shown how these narratives were reported.

The study has revealed that most of the conquest narratives have come to us from written sources and not from oral traditions, as some have thought.

The researcher comes to the conclusion that the conquest of Damascus occurred during the month of Rajab in the year 14 A.H. Events before and after the conquest have been arranged in special diagrams for easier explanation.

Keywords: Islamic Conquest, narratives, conquest of Damascus, Islamic tradition.

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